

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES AND TACKLING INEQUALITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	Agenda Item No. 5
24 JANUARY 2011	Public Report

Report of the Director of Children's Services

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MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION – REDUCING NEETS

1. PURPOSE

To update the Committee on the numbers of young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) in Peterborough and to describe work currently being undertaken.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee consider the report and offer support to intervention activities to reduce NEET where appropriate.

3. LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT

The reduction of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) is a critical national indicator (NI117).

4. BACKGROUND

The Young People's Service delivers connexions services within Peterborough to meet the following statutory responsibilities:

- Under Section 8 of the Employment and Training Act 1973 (amended by the Trade Union and Reform and Employment Rights Act 1993) to provide a careers service for young people, including careers information, advice and guidance and support to find suitable employment and training
- Under Section 114 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000 to provide support to young people to encourage and enable their participation in education or training
- Under Section 139 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000, to carry out an assessment for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to assist their transition into post 16 education and training opportunities
- The 14-19 Implementation Plan (2005) made a commitment of offer, by the end of September, a suitable place in post 16 learning to all young people leaving compulsory education. This is known as the September Guarantee. This year the September Guarantee has been extended to all those who reached statutory school leaving age in 2008 and 2009. While these are shared responsibilities, Connexions Service providers are responsible for tracking offers made and supporting young people who have not received an offer.

5. KEY ISSUES

Local and comparative data:

	Nov 2010		Nov 2009	
	%16-18 NEET	% 16-18 not known	%16-18 NEET	% 16-18 not known
Peterborough	8.2%	1.7%	9%	2.8%
East of England	5.9%	5.4%	5.9%	4%
National	6.1%	5%	6.5%	4.4%
Statistical neighbours average	7.9%	6.2%	Data not available	

At the end of November 2010:

- 8.2% of 16-18 year olds were NEET (not in education, employment or training)
- This represents 524 young people, a decrease of 24 from Nov 09
- % not known remains one of the lowest rates both regionally and nationally. This means we know what most young people are currently doing, so our NEET rate is very accurate.

Of the 524 NEET young people:

- 108 are not available for work (mainly 73 teenage parents/pregnant, 24 through illness)
- 13 have a start date agreed for education, employment or training
- 357 are actively seeking education, employment or training
- The highest pockets of NEET are Orton Longueville (47), Dogsthorpe (40), East (38)
- Young people with qualifications below level 2, who've been involved with Youth Offending Service, attended alternative provision pre 16, who are care leavers, teenage parents or who have moderate learning/emotional behavioural difficulties are over-represented in the NEET group.
- Young people with English as an additional language are increasingly at risk of being NEET due to limited access to ESOL courses, though a new course through City College Peterborough started in late November.

NB December NEET figures will be available at the committee meeting.

6. IMPLICATIONS

Current challenges:

- Between January and July 2010, NEET levels were lower than they had been the previous year. This was due to a number of factors including focused work to engage NEET young people through a January Guarantee and additional government funding for around 130 extra places in learning for 16-18 year olds between January and March.
- In August 2010, NEET levels rose to 11.3%, the same as the previous year. From September to date, figures again showed a small improvement on last year.
- Peterborough's performance will be measured on the average NEET percentage over the 3 months November 10 to January 11. Overall we need to reach average of 7.1% NEET during this period to meet our national target. Last year's performance was 8.5% overall.
- In practice this means we would need around 170 fewer 16-18 year olds to be NEET during Nov – Jan than currently.

Current and future actions:

- Work over the summer to engage with young people at risk of becoming NEET, and a range of programmes and activities to support their access to services and to learning opportunities through the September Guarantee
- Next Steps event in late August (following GCSE results) with local learning providers – over 120 young people attended over 2 days for help and advice and to sign up for courses

- Early identification of and support for potential NEET young people at the start of Year 11, using predictive risk profiling with schools
- On-going tracking, support, outreach and follow up work with school/college leavers and NEET young people, including targeted support via locality teams and the connexions Youth Access Point in the Central Library.
- Partnership working with Job Centre Plus, eg Under 18s Adviser working from Youth Access Point and supporting young people to access New Deal as they become 18
- Appointment of a Young People's Employment Adviser to increase the number of young people securing work and training
- Development of new Foundation Learning courses and related opportunities for NEET young people, including a course aimed at young people whose first language is not English in partnership with City College
- Development of city wide NEET engagement programmes offering informal learning and development to support young people in finding work/learning, in partnership with a range of organisations including Peterborough United, Cross Keys Homes and Mears.

7. CONSULTATION

The tracking and analysis of NEET data, performance and intervention to improve performance all form key agenda matters at the Achieve Economic Well-Being Partnership Group and therefore is regularly fed into the Children's Trust Partnership Board for consideration.

8. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The Young People's Service continues to focus resources on work to prevent education leavers becoming NEET, and to target resources to track and to support those who are NEET, and to enable them to access suitable opportunities and provision. We work in close partnership with a range of services and organisations around these strands.

9. NEXT STEPS

Return to the Committee for monitoring of progress later in 2011.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

All data tables and comparators have been drawn utilising current data from the Connexions Client Information System (CCIS)

11. APPENDICES

None

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